

of the origin of mankind and the marvels of human nature, reads Lucretius and Montaigne again, and prepares a plan of his intended composition. The first poem is to narrate "The Birth of the World" according to the views of modern science; the second—to be called "Mankind"—is to form a synthesis of universal history; while the third, the logical outcome of the previous ones, is to be written in a prophetic strain showing "The Man of the Future" rising ever higher and higher, mastering every force of nature, and at last becoming godlike.

But though that stupendous composition is long meditated, only eight lines of it are actually written. The long winter ends, the spring comes, and Zola turns to enjoy the sun-rays — at times in the Jardin des Plantes, which is near his lodging, at others along the quays of the Seine, where he spends hours among the thousands of second-hand books displayed for sale on the parapets. And all the life of the river, the whole picturesque panorama of the quays as they were then, becomes fixed in his mind, to supply, many years afterwards, the admirable descriptive passages given in the fourth chapter of his novel "L'Œuvre." There it is Claude Lantier who is shown walking the quays with his sweet-heart Christine. And Zola was certainly not alone every

time that he himself paced them. We know to what a young man's fancy turns in springtime; and he was as human as others. He lived, moreover, in the Quartier Latin, which still retained some of its old freedom of life, in spite of the many changes it was undergoing.

Baron Haussmann had set pick and spade to work there, and many an ancient tenement and court had been swept away in piercing the Rue des ficoles and the Boulevard St.